

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM USDEL SECRETARY IN BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE

USMISSION USBERLIN

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USMISSION NATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTO 32048

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV PFOR GW GE UR

SUBJ: DECEMBER 1976 QUADRIpartite MEETING ON BERLIN  
AND GERMANY: FRG-SOVIET RELATIONS

### 1. SUMMARY

AT SENIOR LEVEL MEETING DEC. 8 FRG FONOFF POLITICAL  
DIRECTOR VAN WELL DESCRIBED FRG AS SEEKING TO MAKE  
A NEW BEGINNING IN ITS RELATIONS WITH USSR. FRG  
INTENDED TO AVOID CONFRONTATION AND HOPED THAT BOTH  
SIDES WOULD EXERCISE RESTRAINT IN THE COMING MONTHS.  
HE LISTED THREE MINOR FAVORABLE ACTIONS BY THE USSR  
WHICH WERE DIFFICULT TO ASSESS BUT WERE GOOD SIGNS.  
VAN WELL LEFT IMPRESSION THAT BREZHNEV VISIT WOULD  
TAKE PLACE AFTER CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT HAS SEEN HIS  
WESTERN COLLEAGUES AND THAT FRG WOULD NOT INSIST  
THAT THE SOVIETS CONCLUDE ANY OF THE OUTSTANDING  
THREE TREATIES AS A CONDITION FOR THE VISIT.BECAUSE  
OF PRESS PLAY ABOUT DIFFERENCES ON BERLIN ISSUES  
WITHIN THE COALITION AND WITH THE ALLIES, THE FRG  
WAS ESPECIALLY ANXIOUS TO PROCEED ON THE BASIS OF  
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THE COMMON POSITION DEVELOPED WITH THE ALLIES IN THE

BONN GROUP STUDY OF THE REPRESENTATION OF INTERESTS OF  
BERLIN ABROAD. END SUMMARY

2. AT SENIOR LEVEL MEETING ON BERLIN AND GERMANY,  
FRG FONOFF POLITICAL DIRECTOR VAN WELL SAID THAT BONN  
IS MOVING SLOWLY ON FRG/USSR RELATIONS WITH COALITION  
TALKS TAKING PRECEDENCE OVER PREPARATIONS FOR THE  
BREZHNEV VISIT. VAN WELL SAID THAT CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT  
HAD MADE CLEAR THAT HE WANTED TO SEE HIS WESTERN  
COLLEAGUES AND ESPECIALLY PRESIDENT-ELECT CARTER BEFORE  
HE SAW BREZHNEV. GERMANS HAD MENTIONED BREZHNEV  
VISIT TO GROMYKO IN NEW YORK WHO HAD REPLIED ONLY THAT  
MEETING WOULD HAVE TO BE CAREFULLY PREPARED BUT THAT  
SOVIETS DID NOT YET HAVE SPECIFIC VIEWS. VAN WELL  
REMARKED PARENTHETICALLY THAT USSR AND GDR WERE SHOWING  
KEEN INTEREST IN FORTHCOMING FRG GOVERNMENT DECLARATION  
BUT THEY WOULD FIND THAT THAT DECLARATION WILL BREAK  
LITTLE NEW GROUND.

3. VAN WELL SAID FRG/USSR TRADE IS DEVELOPING WELL,  
ALTHOUGH FOR FIRST TIME SOVIETS HAD INJECTED A BERLIN  
ISSUE INTO TRADE WHEN THEY REFUSED TO HEAR A  
PRESENTATION ON THE GENERAL ECONOMIC SITUATION BY  
BERLIN PROFESSOR LAHOSKY AT THE MEETING OF THE  
FRG/USSR JOINT ECONOMIC COMMISSION. THERE ARE NO  
NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN THE TRADE FIELD AND NO TALKS, FOR  
EXAMPLE, ON TREATIES.

4. PRINCIPAL FRG EFFORT IS NOW TO MAKE A NEW  
BEGINNING IN FRG/USSR RELATIONS. THERE WERE SOME  
MINOR DEVELOPMENTS IN RECENT WEEKS WHICH, THOUGH  
THEY WERE NOT NECESSARILY IMPORTANT, SEEM TO INDICATE  
A SLIGHT FLEXIBILITY ON THE PART OF THE SOVIETS;  
FOR EXAMPLE, THE AUSTRIANS HAD AGREED TO CONTINUE TO  
USE "LAND BERLIN" IN THE BERLIN CLAUSE OF PENDING  
BILATERAL TREATIES AND TO GIVE AN EXPLANATION --  
WORKED OUT WITH THE FRG -- TO THE PARLIAMENT. THEY  
HAD SHOWN THE STATEMENT TO THE SOVIETS, WHO SAID IT  
WAS NOT ALL THEY HAD HOPED FOR BUT THAT THEY  
REALIZED THE AUSTRIANS HAD DONE THE BEST THEY COULD.  
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EARLIER BONDARENKO HAD GONE TO VIENNA AND TAKEN A  
VERY TOUGH LINE WITH THE AUSTRIANS.

ANOTHER RECENT EXAMPLE WAS THE VISIT OF  
PRESIDENT SCHEEL TO THE SOVIET TRADE EXHIBITION IN  
BERLIN. BONN HAD LAID CONDITIONS FOR THE VISIT:  
NEITHER AMBASSADOR TO THE GDR ABRASIMOV NOR  
WEST BERLIN CONGEN BYKOV WERE TO BE ON HAND FOR THE VISIT.

THE SOVIETS HAD ACCEPTED BONN'S CONDITIONS AND HAD RECEIVED PRESIDENT SCHEEL PROPERLY..

ANOTHER INCIDENT HAD OCCURRED IN MOSCOW WHERE A SOVIET OFFICIAL HAD INSISTED THAT TWO WEST BERLIN FIRMS COULD NOT DISPLAY THEIR GOODS IN THE SAME HALL AS THE FRG FIRMS PLANNING TO PARTICIPATE IN A TRADE FAIR IN EARLY 1977. THE GERMANS HAD PROTESTED. THE SOVIETS HAD SIMPLY DORPPED THEIR DEMAND, WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTRY SAYING THAT THE OFFICIAL WHO HAD MADE IT WAS NOT WELL INFORMED, AND THAT IN ANY CASE THE MINISTRY COULD NOT CONTACT HIM BECAUSE HE WAS "SICK."

5. VAN WELL SAID THAT FRG WANTED TO AVOID UNNECESSARY CONFRONTATION WITH SOVIETS. THEY HOPED THAT FRG/USSR RELATIONS COULD IMPROVE ON THE BASIS OF MUTUAL EXAMPLE AND WITHOUT QUADRIPARTITE CONSULTATIONS, WHICH THE FRG DID NOT WANT AND WHICH HE ASSUMED THE THREE ALLIES DID NOT WANT. THE ONLY REAL PROBLEM BETWEEN THEM REMAINED BERLIN. THE FRG WANTED TO DEAL WITH THE QUESTION OF THE INCLUSION OF BERLIN IN TREATIES ON THE BASIS OF A COMMON POSITION. THIS IS WHY THE FRG ATTACHED SO MUCH IMPORTANCE TO THE BONN GROUP'S STUDY ON THE FRG REPRESENTATION OF THE INTERESTS OF BERLIN ABROAD. ASKED BY HIBBERT WHETHER HE MIGHT CONSLUDE THAT FRG PRESSURE FOR SPEED IN CONCLUDING THE STUDY WAS CONNECTED NOT WITH THE BREZHNEV VISIT BUT WITH COALITION TALKS, VAN WELL RESPONDED THAT THE STUDY WAS IMPORTANT IN AND OF ITSELF. THE FRG WAS SERIOUSLY CONCERNED ABOUT PRESS REPORTS INDICATING DIFFERENCES ON BERLIN ISSUES WITHIN THE COALITION AND WITH THE ALLIES. THE SOVIETS WERE VERY INTERESTED IN SUCH REPORTS. THEREFORE, THE FRG WISHED TO BE ABLE TO CONFIDENTIAL

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POINT TO AN AGREED QUADRIPARTITE POSITION IN ITS HANDLING OF THE REPRESENTATION ISSUE. ALSO IT WAS CLEAR THAT, IMMEDIATELY AFTER FORMATION OF THE NEW GOVERNMENT, THE FONOFF WOULD BE ASKED TO DEVELOP PROPOSALS AND CONCEPTS FOR RELATIONS WITH THE SOVIET UNION. IT WOULD LIKE TO DO THAT ON THE BASIS OF A COMMON APPROACH WITH ALLIES.

6. WITH RESPECT TO THE BRESHNEV VISIT, THE FRG DID NOT EXPECT THAT THE VISIT WOULD BREAK THE DEADLOCK OVER THE THREE TREATIES SO LONG STALLED OVER THE BERLIN ISSUE. IF PROGRESS COULD BE MADE ON ONE OR TWO OF THEM, SO MUCH THE BETTER. IF NOT, THE FRG WOULD WISH TO SAY THAT THE VISIT HAD RESULTED IN A CLEARER UNDERSTANDING OF ISSUES BETWEEN THE FRG

AND THE USSR. VAN WELL EMPHASIZED THAT THIS  
DESCRIPTION OF THE FRG POSITION WAS NOT FOR PUBLIC  
CONSUMPTION. THE FRG CANNOT SAY PUBLICLY THAT  
IT DOES NOT EXPECT RESOLUTION OF THE TREATY PROBLEMS  
DURING THE BREZHNEV VISIT.KISSINGER

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